

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A computer implemented system connected to a computer network and accessible by a plurality of users for specifying, ordering, and manufacturing injection molding systems, comprising in combination:

a configuring subsystem that uses one or more customer defined parameters to generate a customized injection molding system which implements the customer defined parameters;

a processing subsystem in communication with the configuring subsystem that processes the customized injection molding system generated by the configuring subsystem to provide drawings of the customized injection molding system;

a business subsystem in communication with the configuring subsystem that calculates a cost for manufacturing the customized injection molding system and that determines a schedule for completing the customized injection molding system; and

a manufacturing subsystem in communication with the configuring subsystem that provides input for manufacturing the customized injection molding system generated by the configuring subsystem;

wherein the customized injection molding system is created by assembling a plurality of components, the components including at least ~~includes~~ a manifold plate that was partially manufactured and placed in inventory before the configuring subsystem received any customer defined parameters for the customized injection molding system,

the manufacture of the manifold plate being completed after the configuring subsystem receives the customer defined parameters for the customized injection molding system.

2. (Currently amended) The computer implemented system of claim 1, wherein the partially manufactured manifold plate is a unitary manifold plate.

3. (Previously presented) The computer implemented system of claim 1, wherein the customer defined parameters comprise at least one of nozzle types, nozzle pitches, manifold shapes, manifold lengths, or manifold thickness.

4. (Previously presented) The computer implemented system of claim 1, wherein the processing subsystem further provides a bill of materials for the customized injection molding system.

5. (Previously presented) The computer implemented system of claim 1, wherein the configuring subsystem is in communication with a web page server and the computer network.

6. (Previously presented) The computer implemented system of claim 5, wherein the computer network is the Internet.

7. (Previously presented) The computer implemented system of claim 5, wherein the computer network is an Intranet.

8. (Cancelled).

9. (Previously presented) The computer implemented system of claim 1, wherein the configuring subsystem provides for verification of the customized injection molding system in terms of at least one of functionality and safety.

Claims 10-16 (cancelled).

17. (Currently amended) In a computer network-based system, an automated method for specifying, ordering, and manufacturing hot runner systems, comprising:

partially manufacturing a plurality of ~~hot runner components, including~~ manifold plates, ~~that form at least a~~ for forming portions of a hot runner systems in a first phase;

placing the partially manufactured manifold plates ~~hot runner components~~ in inventory;

after placing the partially manufactured manifold plates in inventory, receiving one or more customer defined parameters;

using the one or more customer defined parameters in a configuration subsystem to generate a customized hot runner system;

submitting the customized hot runner system for processing to a processing subsystem;

after generating the customized hot runner system, removing one of the partially manufactured manifold plates ~~hot runner components~~ from inventory; and

further manufacturing the partially manufactured manifold plate ~~hot runner components~~ in accordance with the customer defined parameters in a second phase to ~~create the customized hot runner system; and~~

assembling the further manufactured manifold plate with other hot runner components to create the customized hot runner system.

18. (Previously presented) The method of claim 17, further including creating drawings for the customized hot runner system via the processing subsystem.

19. (Previously presented) The method of claim 17, further including creating a bill of materials for the customized hot runner system via the processing subsystem.

20. (Previously presented) The method of claim 17, further including determining manufacturing parameters based on the customized hot runner system.

21. (Currently amended) The method of claim 17 wherein the partially manufactured manifold plates are unitary manifold plates.

22. (Previously presented) The method of claim 17 wherein the manifold plates have predefined shapes for hot runner systems, and a completed manifold plate has substantially the same shape as the predefined shape of the partially manufactured manifold plate.

23. (Previously presented) The method of claim 17 wherein the manifold plates are partially manufactured by drilling into each manifold plate a common melt inlet and one or more flow channels in communication with the melt inlet, the melt inlet being substantially perpendicular to the flow channels.

Claims 24-27 (cancelled).

28. (New) The method of claim 17 wherein the other hot runner components comprise one or more of the following: plugs, nozzles, and/or heaters.